

**Memorandum on Waiver of
Restriction on Providing Funds to
the Palestinian Authority**

February 28, 2008

Presidential Determination No. 2008–13

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiver of Restriction on Providing
Funds to the Palestinian Authority

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 650(b) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2008 (Division J, Public Law 110–161) (the “Act”), I hereby certify that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive the provisions of section 650(a) of the Act, in order to provide funds appropriated to carry out chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, to the Palestinian Authority.

You are directed to transmit this determination to the Congress, with a report pursuant to section 650(d) of the Act, and to publish the determination in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the Denmark-United
States Social Security Agreement**

February 28, 2008

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95–216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith the Agreement Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Denmark on Social Security, which consists of two separate instruments: a principal agreement and an administrative arrangement. The agreement was signed at Copenhagen on June 13, 2007.

The United States-Denmark Agreement is similar in objective to the social security agreements already in force with Australia,

Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Such bilateral agreements provide for limited coordination between the United States and foreign social security systems to eliminate dual social security coverage and taxation, and to help prevent the loss of benefit protection that can occur when workers divide their careers between two countries. The United States-Denmark Agreement contains all provisions mandated by section 233 and other provisions that I deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of section 233, pursuant to section 233(c)(4).

I also transmit for the information of the Congress a report prepared by the Social Security Administration explaining the key points of the Agreement, along with a paragraph-by-paragraph explanation of the provisions of the principal agreement and the related administrative arrangement. Attached to this report is the report required by section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, which describes the effect of the Agreement on income and expenditures of the U.S. Social Security program and the number of individuals affected by the Agreement.

I commend to the Congress the United States-Denmark Social Security Agreement and related documents.

George W. Bush

The White House,
February 28, 2008.

**Remarks Following a Meeting With
Secretary General Jakob Gijssbert
“Jaap” de Hoop Scheffer of the
North Atlantic Treaty Organization**

February 29, 2008

President Bush. It’s my honor to welcome the Secretary General of NATO back to the Oval Office. Last time I was with the Secretary General, I was trying to keep up with him on my mountain bike. He is a dear friend and a strong leader.

I appreciate the—Jaap, your helping to transform NATO so it deals with the threats

of the 21st century. You've done your job with great dignity and clarity of thought. And I'm looking forward to coming to Bucharest to support your efforts to make sure NATO is a relevant organization aimed at bringing security and peace to the world.

We've had a lot of things to discuss. A couple of key points—one, Afghanistan; the United States is committed to the NATO mission in Afghanistan. We're committed to a comprehensive strategy that helps folks in Afghanistan realize security, at the same time, economic prosperity and political progress.

Secondly, our hope is that nations that have applied to join NATO continue to meet their MAP obligations. And I'm looking forward to getting an assessment of the progress that these three nations have made, from you, before we take the vote on enlargement.

I appreciate very much NATO's role in helping to provide some sense of stability in the Balkans. Thank you for doing a training mission in Iraq. Overall, thanks for being a force for good. And I'm proud to welcome you back here.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you. Thank you, George.

Four working weeks until the Bucharest summit of NATO. I can echo the President's words. First of all, NATO's operations and missions—we have a long-term commitment vis-a-vis Afghanistan. I thank the President for the United States contribution in the NATO framework, which is an essential one. All 26 NATO allies are there, and we are there for the long haul. We are there to support President Karzai and the Afghan people. But we're also there because we're fighting terrorism, and we cannot afford to lose. We will not lose. We are not losing; we are prevailing.

May I mention Kosovo, which will be discussed. The secondary important NATO presence, 60,000 strong, to protect all Kosovars, majority, minority, Albanian, or Serb, so that also Kosovo will have a future.

NATO enlargement, the President mentioned. The nations concerned should go on with their reforms. No tickets are punched yet, but NATO enlargement will be on the agenda of the Bucharest summit, and cer-

tainly also what I call NATO finding the answers to modern threats and challenges, be it energy security and NATO's role as a bringer of added value. Cyber defense—we saw a huge cyber attack on Estonia not that long ago. Missile defense is certainly an issue.

So we have a real full calendar in Bucharest, and that is basically the calendar the President and I discussed. And I'm always very much enjoying the hospitality not only in the Oval but at the Crawford ranch as well.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. Thank you.

Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer. Thanks.

President Bush. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:48 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer referred to President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan.

Statement on the Resignation of Donald E. Powell as Coordinator of Gulf Coast Region Recovery and Rebuilding

February 29, 2008

Don Powell is an exceptional leader who has worked tirelessly and effectively to help the people of New Orleans and the gulf coast region recover and rebuild from one of our Nation's most destructive natural disasters.

Don brought to the job of coordinating our Federal rebuilding efforts the perfect combination of talent, temperament, experience, and compassion. Today, due in part to his leadership and outstanding work with State and local leaders, the gulf coast is on the road to recovery. While challenges remain, the region is open for business, critical infrastructure is being rebuilt, and schools are up and running. People are reclaiming their lives, and our Nation owes Don a debt of gratitude. I appreciate his service to the country and thank him for his dedication.

I am also grateful to Paul Conway, Don's chief of staff, who will assume the duties of the Federal Coordinator for the Office of Gulf Coast Rebuilding in the interim.

Laura and I wish Don well as he returns to Texas.